

ought else which tends to real public enlightenment is right and good, no matter how heavily it may press on any particular class—no matter even if it deprives some class-interest of its bread and butter. But you will do well to bear in mind that true knowledge is always modest. It is ignorance that boasts most loudly. They only who know least think they know all things. Hence you should beware of loud professions whether emanating from books or teachers. Aim to know thoroughly what you do know, but deceive not yourselves with the idea that nothing more remains to be known. Especially should you avoid self-sufficiency in matters which are collateral to the main course of your life, such as law. After the best instructions we can give, you may in future, if engaged in any extensive business, frequently find yourselves compelled to refer to your legal adviser.

* * * Often doubtless you have heard the flippantly expressed sentiment that law is or ought simply to be common sense, and that where it is not, it is simply quibbling technicality—a snare for the unwary and a delusion to those whom it should protect. And pray of what calling in life might not the same remark be as aptly made? And what is this common sense of which we hear so much? If it is the crude views and opinions of each *Sir Oracle* who assumes to know all things, we may well be excused for declining the test. But if it consists in the double-distilled essence of the world's best thought, the ultimate result of the experience of ages modified by the advancing light of the present with reference to the subject to be judged, then may we all reverently bow to its decision whatever our calling. Our laws of to-day though sharing imperfection in common with all things human are pre-eminently in accord with reason and justice, or if you will, with that hazy, indefinable something which all laud so loudly under the euphonious name of common sense. Still it does not necessarily follow that in the exercise of *your* best judgment you can always decide for yourselves where reason and justice lie; such power would presuppose a thorough knowledge of all the facts and circumstances necessary to be considered; a true and nice appreciation of their relative bearing and importance, and an intellect trained to view them from conflicting standpoints and weigh them dispassionately. Above all there is necessary an absence of that self-interest which sways so much the strongest minds. Gather from these remarks this conclusion that you may as reasonably expect to make your own boots or manufacture your own watch, as to do your own law business. But as you should be able to lace your boots without the aid of your shoemaker, and set your watch after it has run down without referring to your watchmaker, so there are many matters which you should understand aright without consulting a lawyer.